

David Ebony's Top Ten

Robert Feintuch at CRG

Robert Feintuch produces an extraordinary kind of realist painting that is both conceptual and figurative. He seems to relate a narrative in each work, yet there are never clearly discernible story lines. His technique appears to be photo-derived, although the work seems to have no basis in reality.

The works in this show, which is titled "Heat," are all part of a recent series of self-portraits -- but when the artist appears, we never see his face, only his naked backside. In *Self Portrait with Clock* the artist stands nude with his butt to the viewer. He holds a fire bucket, as if he's on his way to some unseen conflagration. Is the fire a metaphor for passion, for truth, for artistic creation? Suddenly the work seems a striking metaphor for the act of making art. Feintuch is dealing here with the narcissism of the artist. (I wonder if he has ever met Sean Landers!) In the painting, he has already emptied one fire bucket; the liquid from which is spilled on the ground beside him. A clock ticking on the wall above reminds the artist, if not of his own mortality, at least of the fleeting moment of inspiration.

In another image the artist is caught with his pants down -- literally. His trousers hang down around his ankles and all of his pocket change has spilled out onto the floor. In a weird way this image exclaims that the artist has given the painting his all. Everywhere in this show Feintuch combines understatement with high drama. His references may be obscure but his articulation is perfectly clear. "Heat" is an ode to the impetuousness of the artistic temperament.

Robert Feintuch, "Heat," Apr. 29 -May 29, 1999, at CRG, 93 Grand, New York, N.Y., 10013.



**Robert Feintuch**  
*Self-Portrait with Clock*  
1999  
polymer emulsion on canvas  
72 x 45 1/2 in.



**Robert Feintuch**

*Out of Pocket*

1999

polymer emulsion on canvas

22 x 30 in.